



**State Representative**  
**Linda Menna Gentile**  
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Bringing Home Our Tax Dollars to Ansonia & Derby



Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$ 1,114,081
Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund Grant	\$ 693,180
Town Aid Road Grant	\$ 272,420
Local Capital Improvement (LoCIP) Program	\$ 281,477
School Transportation	\$ 459,303
Adult Education	\$ 144,849
Education Cost Sharing Grant	\$ 18,852,173
Increase over 2005	\$ 973,138

State Representative  
**Linda Menna Gentile**  
2005 Capitol Report



Serving the Cities of Ansonia and Derby

Dear Friends,

My first legislative session was an exciting one. In addition to meeting with and listening to my constituents, the year was spent focusing on issues before my committees, building relationships with my colleagues and working with state agencies to effect positive changes. The foundation I have developed over this past session will serve me well next year.

This newsletter highlights some of the more important accomplishments of the 2005 session. I welcome your ideas and opinions. Please feel free to contact my office if you would like more information on any of these issues or any other matters of particular importance to you.

It is with great pride that I serve the cities of Ansonia and Derby. I have worked very hard to see that my communities received their fair share and I will continue to work as hard as I can to deliver the services you expect and deserve.

Thank you for your input, support and encouragement and, most importantly, thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you.

*Linda*

Budget and Surplus Highlights

This year’s budget appropriated \$15.2 billion for the 2006 fiscal year and \$15.9 billion for the 2007 fiscal year. In addition, we had \$603 million in surplus funds from the last budget.

- \$137 million to retire debt,
- \$100 million to the teacher’s retirement fund,
- \$57 million in additional education monies to cities and towns,
- \$142 million in increased town aid over the biennium, providing local property tax relief,
- \$18 million for OPM (Office of Policy & Management) contingency needs,
- \$15 million for Town Aid to Roads,
- \$14 million to Priority School Districts,
- \$31 million to cities and towns for Payment in Lieu of Taxes.



## Taxes

Immediate elimination of the state's estate and gift tax was passed. The tax will now only apply to:

- Estates that exceed \$2 million
- Gifts above the federal gift tax threshold that in aggregate over the donor's life exceed \$2 million
- A person's estate if the combined value of taxable gifts and his taxable estate exceed \$2 million. PA 05-251

Property tax credit on state income taxes will increase from \$350 in 2005 to \$400 in 2006. PA 05-251

State income tax reductions for single filers is deferred for two years. PA 05-251

A Nursing Home Provider Fee tax will be imposed on nursing homes, allowing the state to claim additional money in federal dollars. Those dollars will be used to provide rate increases for Medicaid patients in nursing homes and to private care providers. PA 05-251

The minimum wage is increased. PA 05-32

- \$7.40 on Jan 1, 2006
- \$7.65 on Jan 1, 2007



## Seniors



The Department on Aging will be a separate agency and no longer part of the Department of Social Services as of January 2007. PA 05-280

ConnPACE has adjusted its program to coordinate its benefits with the new federal Medicaid Part D so that participants do not pay more than ConnPACE's \$30 annual registration fee and \$16.25 per prescription co-payment for drugs. PA 05-280

The Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders raised the asset limits from \$19,020 for singles to \$28,530 and from \$28,530 to \$38,040 for married couples, allowing more individuals to qualify. PA 05-280

The state's request that the transfer of assets be subject to a five-year look back is repealed. It will remain at the current three years. PA 05-280

The maximum prize for bingo games designed for senior citizens increases from \$5 to \$20. PA 05-11

Dial-a-Ride will receive \$10 million in the next two years. PA 05-4

A pilot program was instituted to provide rides for seniors who can no longer drive. PA 05-280

## Veterans

As of 2008, 50% of federally taxable military retirement pay will be exempted from the state income tax. PA 05-251

The Connecticut National Guard is now able to award bronze stars and silver stars to qualified members of a militia who have served for 30 days post September 11, 2001 in a wartime capacity.

State law now allows any member of the armed forces and their spouse stationed in Connecticut under military orders to be eligible for in-state tuition at UConn, Connecticut State University and the community-technical colleges. PA 05-110

A new law creates a Military Family Relief Fund, funded in part by taxpayer donations, for relatives of Connecticut-domiciled armed forces members on active duty, including guard members facing financial hardship because of the member's service. PA 05-3



## Education

Continuing a commitment to education, the legislature this session:

- Created an Early Childhood Education Cabinet to coordinate resources across agencies and promote quality among early childhood development and education programs. PA 05-245
- Required the education commissioner to develop a statewide developmentally appropriate assessment tool to measure a child's readiness for kindergarten. PA 05-245
- Allowed the State Department of Education to establish a pilot program to use technology in providing computer – assisted writing, instructions, and testing for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in public school. PA 05-245
- Increased from \$2000 to \$3000 annually the maximum per-student awards for those attending Connecticut institutions under the Capitol Scholarship Grant Program. PA 05-245
- The high cost of college textbooks has prompted a review to determine the cause and determine a means to reduce prices. A report of the findings is due January 1, 2006. PA 05-3

